

# Learning from Abraham

Romans 4

**LG Christian Formation Class**

November 2, 2025

## Romans 1:16-17

- 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.
- 17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed - a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

# Review...

## From Romans 3

1. All people are guilty before God, under God's wrath and deserves judgment.
2. God gives the gift of justification to all who has faith in Jesus.
3. The gift of justification is available because Jesus propitiated God's wrath through his sacrifice and blood on the cross.

### *Romans 3:23-24*

*“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”*



# Father Abraham





# Outline: Learning from Abraham's Justification

## Romans 4

| 1-8                                                             | 9-12                                               | 13-17                                    | 18-22                                              | 23-25                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Abraham's justification by grace through credited righteousness | Father Abraham of both believing Jews and Gentiles | Justification comes by faith, not by law | Character of Abraham's faith proved in his actions | Justification for us who believe in Jesus' death and resurrection |

# Romans 4:1-3

1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter?

2 If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about - but not before God.

3 What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

## Nature of Abraham's faith

### Gen 12:1-3

**Command:** Go from your country to a land that I will show you

**Promise:** I will make you a great nation

### Gen 15:4-5

**Promise:** a son will be your heir and your offspring will be as numerous as the stars

### Gen 15:6

*Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness*

# Justification by Grace because of imputed righteousness

*Gen 15:6*

*“Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness”*

**God's promise** - I will give you a son, make you a great nation

**Abraham's response** - he believed God

**God's response** - God gave Abraham the gift of justification by imputed (credited) righteousness

**Believe** - Abraham responds to God's promise with faith, to believe that God will do as he says

**Biblical faith** - intellectually to believe, emotionally to want what God offers, and volitionally choose to rely on God's promise

**To impute (credited)**

- Enter a credit into an account that the person has not earned (not inherently belonging to him)
- God chose to treat Abraham from that moment on as righteous even though still a sinner (positional justification)



# Romans 4:4-8

4 Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.

5 However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.

6 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

7 “Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”

## Explaining Imputation

### 1. Wages (4-5)

- what the employer owes you
- God does not owe us justification because we cannot work for it, we can only receive it as a gift through faith

### 2. David's psalm (6-8)

- Referencing Psalm 32
- God imputes His righteousness to believers, not our sins



## Wiersbe:

David made two amazing statements:

- (1) God forgives sins and imputes righteousness apart from works;
- (2) God does not impute our sins. In other words, once we are justified, our record contains Christ's perfect righteousness and can never again contain our sins.



## Moo:

“Sentenced to eternal death because of sin, God intervenes in a sheer act of grace and declares us innocent before him.”



# Romans 4:9-12

9 Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness.

10 Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before!

11 And he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.

12 And he is then also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

**Abraham is father of all who believe**

*Abraham believed God and was credited righteousness before his circumcision because (so that, in order to be) he is the father of all who believe, both the Jews and Gentiles.*

***Are you a 'son' of God today?***



# Romans 4:13-17

13 It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith.

14 For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless,

15 because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring - not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

17 As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed - the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

**Justification comes by faith, not by law**

**Why is this important?**

- *Because if we believers are part of Abraham's inheritance, receiving the same gift of imputed righteousness, then this grace can only come by faith, not by works (law).*
- *The law cannot impute righteousness, only exposes sin and brings wrath.*

**Transgression is a direct violation of a specific command.**

# Romans 4:17b-22

17 ... the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead - since he was about a hundred years old - and that Sarah’s womb was also dead.

20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,

21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

22 This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.”

## Character of Abraham’s Faith is Proved in his Actions

### Believing Faith

- *‘opening our hands’ to receive the gift God gives.*
- *Has power not in itself but because of the God in whom we place our faith.*
- *Based on God’s Word.*

### Practical Faith

- *trusting in God to do what He alone can do and living in a way that demonstrates that trust.*



**Romans 4:23-25**  
23 The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone,  
24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness - for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.  
25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

**Justification for us who believe in Jesus’ death and resurrection**

| <i>Abraham</i>                                                                      | <i>Us/Today</i>                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Same <b>GOD</b> , the Promise Giver, then and forevermore                           |                                                            |
| Promise of a son                                                                    | Promise of salvation through Jesus’ death and resurrection |
| Same <b>POWER OF GOD</b> to accomplish what he promised, what is impossible for man |                                                            |
| Same <b>FAITH</b> to receive the promise as a gift, by grace through faith          |                                                            |

# Recap/Application...

1. As believers, God has imputed His righteousness and forgiven our sins. But unconfessed sins erode our fellowship with God. *Are you carrying any unconfessed sins?*
2. In Paul's day, some people taught that unless a person is circumcised, he had no hope of being saved. *What kinds of false ideas do people today have about what is required for salvation?*
3. Abraham was justified when he responded in believing faith to God. His life displayed his believing faith by his practical faith. James 2:18 says "... I will show you my faith by my works." *What areas of your life need to change to display your faith in God through your actions?*
4. Romans 1:16 says that the gospel is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes, and this power was shown in raising Jesus Christ from the dead for our justification when he was delivered up to die on our account. *Do you believe?*